

Coin Board News

For Collectors of Antique Coin Boards

Number 62 — Spring 2022



COLD TURKEY I haven't been able to buy any nice boards this past quarter, though I've added a few pieces that most of you likely have already. This is disappointing after the exciting news of my Whitman Third Edition board bonanza that led off *CBN 61*. Between the lack of new inventory and my traveling schedule this time of year I'm holding off on producing another list of stuff for sale. As always, I'll entertain want lists of items desired.

MARKET ACTIVITY I always save the coin board offerings I've seen for reporting in this publication, but during the past quarter I've added only eight pieces to the list; that's how slow things have been. Just two of these entries are notable enough to mention here. The first is an example of a nearly filled Kent board K1¢A2b for Indian Pennies. The board, which is still being offered as of this writing, appears to be in decent condition. The images, however, have been so drastically enhanced in an attempt to highlight the coins that I'm unable to discern which of the two varieties it is. Also worth noting is a pair of rare Gramercy Stamp Company boards offered as a lot, one of each of the two known titles. Normally, this is a call to action on my part, but the condition of the boards, especially that for Lincolns, places their value well below the asking price. As a watcher of this lot I was offered a substantial reduction in price, yet it was still above what I'd ask from my own customers, so the boards remain available.

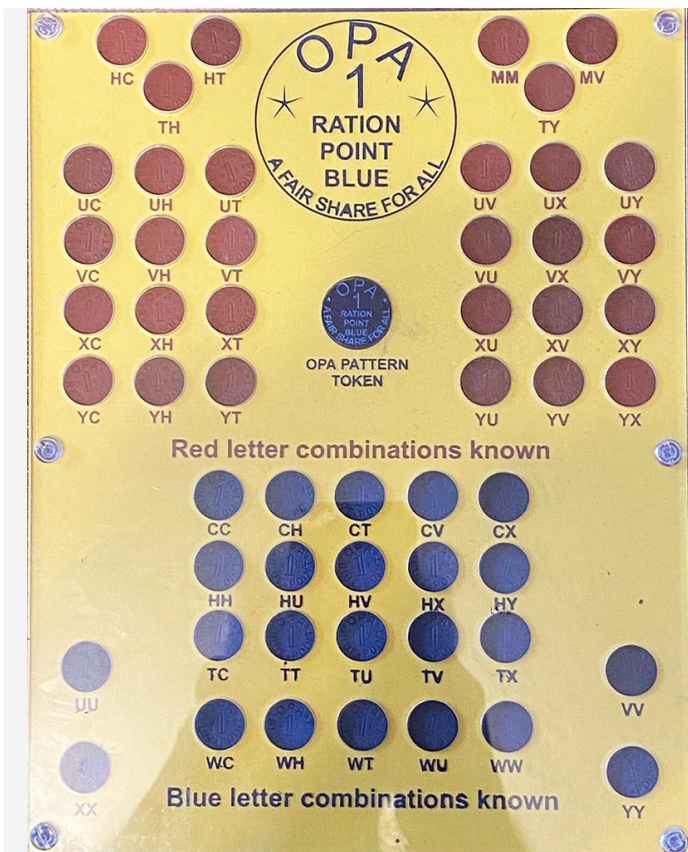
BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

In *CBN 61* I reported that an individual had created his own coin albums which mimic the appearance and construction of the old Library of Coins line. Images of these have been posted on the PCGS Message Board, and now he has added several more titles, including a most unusual one for Indian Head Eagles. The albums carry the copyright of Donahue Numismatics, and several respondents have asked whether there's a plan to market them. The poster was agreeable to that prospect but reminded readers the albums presently are hand made, one at a time. In reading the various comments it's remarkable to me that only one person seems to have heard of LOC albums! I'll keep following this story and advise of any further developments.



BOOK UPDATE While scanning my own collection of boards to display on the Newman Numismatic Portal I discovered that I actually own a variety I thought was yet to be found. A slot had been reserved in my book for the Third Edition Morgan Quarters 1892-1905 board W25¢A3b with leatherette finish, but its discovery was not included in my annual updates. I must have acquired it at some point and failed to report that fact.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN First up in my travels for NGC is the ANA's National Money Show in Colorado Springs March 10-12. Then it's off to the Whitman Baltimore Expo March 31-April 2, followed by the Central States Numismatic Society Show in Schaumburg, Illinois April 27-30. If your plans include any of these events, please stop by to talk coin boards (late afternoon is best for me).



PLASTIC SOCIETY

CBN 44 included photos and a write-up of the coin board produced by Joe Lawonde in the early 1970s for housing OPA tokens. That board is rarely found today, but now there's a competing product which remains available as of this writing. An eBay seller is offering holders similar to those produced by Capital Plastics, with sheets of rigid plastic held together by plastic screws. There are different color insert sheets at the buyer's preference, and the whole ensemble is fairly priced.

DROOF POSITIVE A pet peeve of mine is that some sellers of used, First Edition Whitman Bookshelf albums will plastic shrink-wrap them and sell as "still in the factory wrap." My book on Whitman folders and albums states clearly that First Edition albums were shipped in paper bundles, but I didn't have an example to illustrate this. Recently, an online seller had bundles of some very rare titles, such as the one at right, still in their paper wraps. Too valuable to sell as intact bundles (these are \$100+ albums), he did include photos of each bundle that I was able to download and archive for future reference. Now, if only I could find a bundle of common titles...



WHO'S THAT WOMAN?...filling a coin folder circa 1941. This photo was used by Whitman in its advertising during the early days of the blue folders. A poster on one of the coin message boards identified her as his mother, who saved the clipping in her scrapbook and gave it to him years later.



FRANK ROSS ON THE SUBJECT OF COIN BOARDS

Prior to his death in 1955 Frank C. Ross was a well known figure in the coin hobby. He was a populist writer whose declarations were best taken with a grain of salt, but he did much to draw new collectors into the fold. In those rare instances when his name comes up today, it's typically in reference to his recurrent publicizing of the moderately scarce 1844 Philadelphia Mint dime as "Little Orphan Annie." Ross took a fancy to this one issue and fashioned all manner of speculations as to why it was so rare. He would have been better off directing his efforts at the 1846 dime, which has proved to be quite a bit scarcer than the earlier date.

For 20 years Ross was the numismatic editor of *HOBBIES Magazine* and contributed a column called "Numismatic Thoughts." His July 1938 installment turned the spotlight onto the value of coin boards in advancing the popularity of collecting coins. It's always fun to read contemporaneous accounts of coin board activity, and sadly these are very few in number, as typically boards were looked down upon by the more academic figures in numismatics. At right is that portion of his column pertaining to our favorite subject.

lights. For years and years numismatists and coin dealers have been trying to coin-mind the general public, with but indifferent success. Then was introduced the simple little coin-board, and now many more are collecting coins. A young California Miss who had been specializing in state tokens was presented with a penny coin-board. She started to fill it "just for the fun of the thing", and—but let her tell it. "Since writing you last I have completed the Lincoln penny-board, pennies all in excellent condition. About a three year job. Also have a Buffalo nickel-board complete with the exception of one date. I also have a dime-board. I have been checking on the average of over 400 nickels a day for months and still going strong."

For fun, for sport, for your money's worth: get a coin-board and go to it.

R. S. YEOMAN ON THE SUBJECT OF COIN BOARDS The April-May 1963 issue of *Whitman Coin Supply Merchandiser* included a tribute by the creator of the Red Book to the humble coin board, which was then approaching its 30th anniversary. It still reads well today, so I'm reproducing it here with Whitman's permission:

Every now and then someone goes into a coin shop and carefully unwraps one or more old 11" by 14" black or blue WHITMAN coin boards full of coins. The common remark made by the visitor is. "I came across these old boards when I was straightening out the closet. I'd forgotten I had the collection. What'll you give me for them?"

Any collector who disposes of such a set of Lincoln cents, V nickels, Mercury dimes, etc., is usually pleasantly surprised at the amount he realizes from a group of coins he took out of circulation in the 30's at face value.

An old-time dealer or collector who was active before 1940 can recall how these boards stirred up so much interest in checking dates and mint marks on coins—a new fad. The object was to see how quickly one could fill the entire board. The premium value of coins was slight and incidental. It was simply fun and a challenge to complete the set in much the same spirit as filling in the blank spaces of a cross-word puzzle or of a jig-saw puzzle.

Things started back in 1934 when a man placed a printing order with our company to produce a small series of simple, flat coin boards. It was perfectly natural for "samples" to find their way to our desks and even to our homes where we quickly and irresistibly got the bug to fill them up from our pocket change. The WHITMAN staff was soon sold on the clever new item. Only months later WHITMAN bought the rights to the popular boards and added them to the regular line of books, games and stationery items. With national distribution, the popularity of filling the boards rapidly spread to all corners of the country. A little later boards for obsolete series were added, and before Adolf Hitler got to taking over little neighboring countries in Europe, we had a strong-lunged demanding baby on our hands.

By 1940 the coin hoard gave way to the folder style, so well known today. We had come to realize, along with dealers and collectors, that "filling a board" was more than a fad and had somehow entered the realm of numismatics. Collectors had become more and more conscious of protection for their coins, and they wanted to store them safely in a smaller space. So the folders took over and gained in popularity while the boards gradually faded from the scene.

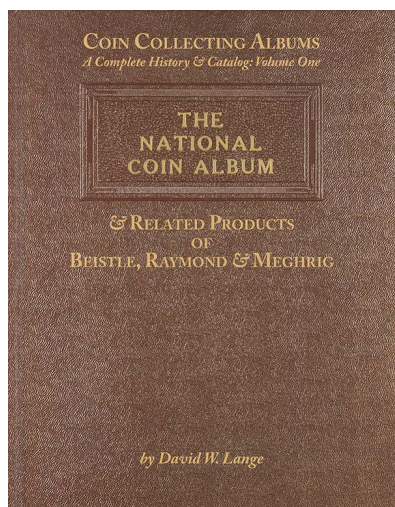
Occasionally we see a framed coin collection in a WHITMAN board on a den or work wall. These old-style holders certainly have a proud dignity which somehow cannot be matched by the modern folders, albums or plastic holders. We just naturally come to attention and execute a silent salute whenever confronted by one of these mementos of bygone days. Everything has a beginning, followed by a normal evolution of growth. There had to be a wheel before we had a cart. So the coin board just had to come first in our burgeoning hobby of modern coin collecting.



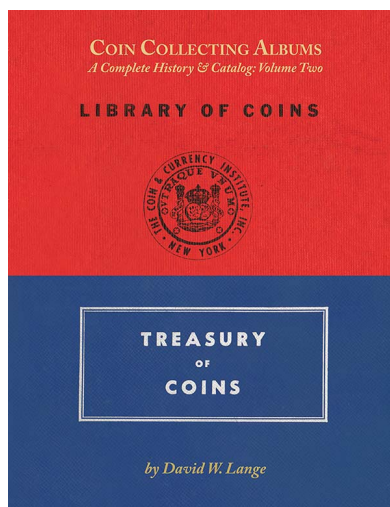
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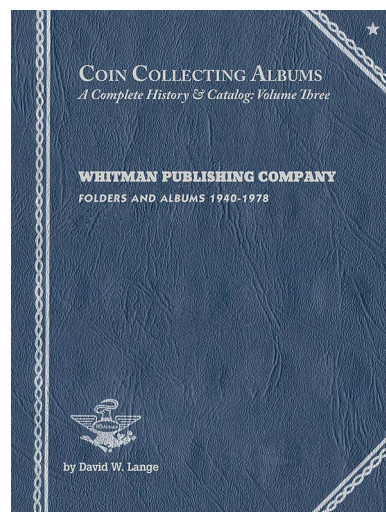
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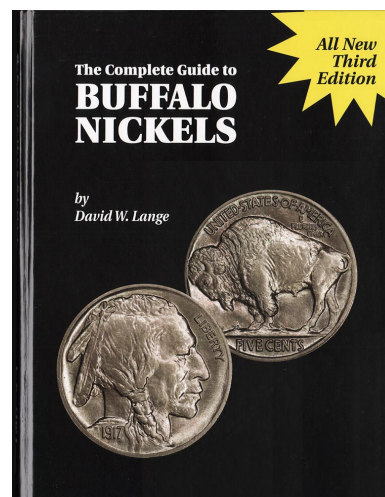
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